



STATE PRINTING CENTER + CENTRAL MAIL SERVICES

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FIRST CLASS, PRIORITY, PRIORITY EXPRESS, AND CERTIFIED MAIL?

It's important to know how to send it because the service you choose will affect how much you pay and whether you know for sure it got to the recipient. So before you send the next batch of letters, find out the main differences between First Class, Priority, and Certified mail.

First Class Mail: If you're sending a letter or small package that weighs 13 ounces or less, First Class mail is the least expensive option. For this reason, many businesses opt for this service, whether they're sending bills, invoices, personal letters, cards or small parcels. This type of mail usually arrives within one to three days.

Priority Mail: Send your letter packs for one flat fee with Priority Mail, no weighing or calculating needed. Like First Class, recipients can get this mail within three days, though Priority Mail may even get there overnight. One of the benefits of Priority Mail is that for an extra charge, you'll get a return receipt that shows the recipient did get the mail. So, if you have a heavy package to mail and would like the option of a signature confirmation, Priority Mail may be the right choice.

Priority Mail Express: To increase the odds of your mail reaching its destination quickly, consider paying for Priority Mail Express. This superior service guarantees overnight delivery, with limited exceptions, to most US addresses 365 days a year. In the event that your package cannot be delivered overnight, you are eligible for a full refund. Priority Mail Express also comes with carrier insurance and signature confirmation at no extra cost.

Certified Mail: Another way to ensure that recipients receive a letter or package is to send it as Certified Mail. This option is available for both First Class and Priority Mail for a small charge. This service requires recipients to sign for their mail. Then you get a mailing receipt that proves they got it, which is helpful and sometimes even required for important documents. Note that Certified Mail is sent with other types of mail, so it does not tend to arrive any faster than First Class or Priority packages and letters.